



# Churchfield Community Association



The newsletter of the Churchfield Community Association (CCA) Issue 34, Winter 2014

The Churchfield Community Association welcomes people living and working around Churchfield Road who are interested in making a difference to our area

## Green Flag Awards for Acton Park

A big thank you to the rangers for making Acton Park, our patch of green space, so special.

Susanne Hickmott



Historians and campaigners have referred to metropolitan green spaces as the 'lungs' of a city. As well as a habitat for wildlife, a park is a haven for city dwellers.

Acton Park was established in 1888 from land which was sold to the local authority by the Goldsmiths Company and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

It is home to the park rangers, who maintain and manage public open spaces for the borough of Ealing. Two teams of five rangers cover 156 parks and other open spaces in Ealing. Each ranger is responsible for approximately fifteen parks in two or three electoral wards.

In 2013, Ealing applied for and successfully gained nine Green Flags parks across the Borough, of which seven were new awards. This is the highest level of new awards of any authority in the country. Green flags are an award for excellence in managing open spaces. Acton Park has won a Green Flag two years running.

Rangers are responsible for park patrols, public safety, dealing with incidents, unauthorised events and vehicles, nature conservation tasks, infrastructure defects and anti-social behaviour. They are first point of call for the public;



The rangers' house with mosaic garden

they attend events and liaise with neighbourhood teams.

John, Carl, Richard, Jamie and Pat, Acton Park's rangers, have over fifty years experience between them. They have a strong educational role, hosting events with local schools, as well as providing work experience. They have also carried out teacher training for schools in how to improve school grounds for nature conservation.

They are involved with the APPLE centre and other local groups, as well as members of the public. Another feature is the Community Garden Project supported by Sybil Elgar Special Needs School. The rangers also work with Acton community on a variety of park related projects and events. They hold regular events with the

Dogs Trust, including micro-chipping and advice sessions for dog owners. They also educate people about the consequences of dog fouling to public health.

The nature conservation role and responsibilities of the team grow by the year. They have a busy job managing invasive species such as Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knot-weed throughout the borough.

The life of a park ranger is constantly changing; they work with Street Watchers and are the Envirocrime Team. They also monitor the parks' ground maintenance contractors and liaise with film units using park facilities.

Despite a considerable reduction in their numbers over the past few years, the park rangers are keen to expand their educational role. They want to develop initiatives, such as the community garden, and the orchards which are planted throughout the borough.

Parks are an important part of public health policy, and the benefits of open spaces have long been recognised. We must treasure and protect our green spaces.

Rangers' teams are available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, with out-of-hours cover for contractors.  
[www.ealing.gov/parks](http://www.ealing.gov/parks); 020 8740 1855



# Café in the Park

Susanne Hickmott

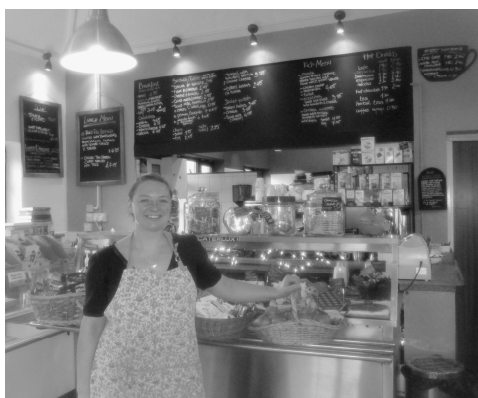
Acton Park is a busy place. There are people heading to or from the station, mums with children and pushchairs, dog walkers, budding footballers, bird watchers and painters. You can relax, unwind and regenerate in the park. It is a haven of changing shapes and colours, with pond, trees, playgrounds and places to sit.

And, just north of where the bandstand once stood, there is the gem of Acton Park Café—a real bonus.

A year after taking over the café, Monika Krocak, Jakub (her partner) and Grzegorz, have transformed it into a bright welcoming place. As well as teas and coffees, there is an amazing range of delicious homemade cakes and fresh food.

Acton Park Café is a friendly place to sit and stare at the colourful views from the windows. It is warm and cosy in winter and, in summer, there is the terrace with parasols.

Monika realised the opportunities the café offered for the community. The café has a busy schedule during weekdays with special sessions for mums and children. These include storytelling, puppet shows and music classes. The café is also a refuge for the football



A bright welcoming place, transformed by Monika

teams that use the park during the week and at weekends.

Running a café is in Monika's blood. Her parents ran a restaurant in Poland where she trained as a chef. She spent nine years working for a contract catering company before taking the brave step of running her own venture. In the early days this involved twelve hours a day, seven days a week.

She and Grzegorz start on the day's baking and cooking at about 7am. All food is cooked from scratch using the best available ingredients. Each day homemade soup and bread are on offer, with a meat and vegetarian main meal at a very reasonable cost. There is also a range of homemade cakes and biscuits. (See them on Facebook.)

Particularly popular are special occasion parties. The café seats up to forty and serves high quality snacks, biscuits and ice cream, with a special menu for children.

Keen to increase the number of lunchtime visitors to the café, Monika and her team are introducing a loyalty card scheme. They are also planning initiatives in relation to the park footballers. And they hope that their music sessions will develop further.

Their hard work has created a congenial and interesting café—a happy place, to sit and while away an hour or so in a very busy world. You will be made very welcome.

**acton park cafe**  
Is inviting all kids for

**Storytelling & Music**  
**January**

**Mondays @10am**  
with Tim and his  
Magic Accordion  
13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>

**Thursdays @10am**  
with Mark and his  
Amazing Guitar  
2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>

£3 per kid for 45min session

More information in Acton Park Café Pavilion in The Park, [actonparkcafe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:actonparkcafe@yahoo.co.uk)

**Acton Park Café, East Churchfield Road—opening times:**

Winter: Mon to Fri, 9—5; Sat & Sun 10—5. Summer: Mon to Sat 9—6; Sun 10—6

[actonparkcafe@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:actonparkcafe@yahoo.co.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Acton-Park-Cafe/481935838516431>

## EVENTS

See: [www.churchfield.org](http://www.churchfield.org)  
eml: [susi@robharrisproductions.com](mailto:susi@robharrisproductions.com)  
Find us on Facebook

### REGULAR CCA EVENTS

- ♦ **'First Wednesday' Socials**  
from 8pm (see website for details)  
Informal meetings for those who live or work in the area—ALL welcome:  
5 February: *George & Dragon*  
5 March: *The Aeronaut*  
2 April: *L'Oriental*  
7 May: *George & Dragon*  
4 June: *The Station House*  
If you've not been to a CCA social and would like to go with someone, Jill Williams could meet you beforehand (Email: [jme@aijk.org](mailto:jme@aijk.org))

- ♦ **Graffiti paint-out:**  
The council is now getting rid of graffiti quickly; if you spot any, contact Sara: 0777 564 4134

### SPECIAL EVENTS

- ♦ **Pass On A Poem**  
*Saturday 8 March, 7.00–9.30pm, at a new location.*  
Read a poem or just come and listen. Contact Linda for more information: [lindataylo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lindataylo@yahoo.co.uk)
- ♦ **CCA Supper Quiz:**  
*Saturday 22 March, 7pm for 7.30 L'Oriental, 94 Churchfield Road*  
Quiz and delicious finger food. £10 inclusive. To book, email Paul: [paultalbot@toucansurf.com](mailto:paultalbot@toucansurf.com)

### ACTON HISTORY GROUP

*Details: David Bays 020 8992 0287*  
Free to members; non-members: £2

- ♦ **Stephen Mears to talk about his book, *Walking on Water*:**  
*Weds 12 February; venue/time TBC*
- ♦ **Southall Manor House and Martinware Pottery:**  
*Wednesday 12 March; 7.30pm*  
*St Mary's Church Hall*  
George Twyman
- ♦ **East Acton Walk 2, north of A40:**  
*Weds 22 March; venue/time TBC*  
Phil Portwood
- ♦ **Treasure Hunt Walk:**  
*Weds 14 May; venue/time TBC*  
David and Amanda Knights
- ♦ **AGM and a short talk on the Ferris Archive:**  
*Wednesday 11 June 7.30pm*  
*St Mary's Church Hall*  
Brian Ferris

# Oaks Development Nodded Through

To squat like a monolithic canker in our town centre

Sara Nathan

We lost. It was very depressing.

Following Ealing Council's poor decision to nod through this development (even though there were few arguments in favour and very many against), the Oaks Action Group lobbied the Mayor's planning team, encouraged literally hundreds of local residents to write opposing the plan and gained quite a lot of media coverage.

But Tory Boris Johnson, sided with Ealing's Labour Council and against the wishes of local residents. From reading the decision, it appears that the Mayor decided the plans were "adequate" for Acton and that any appeal by the developer would be jolly expensive to fight, so should not be risked.

The powers that be seemed to think announcing this on December 18<sup>th</sup> would mean local protestors would calm down over the holidays and the development would then just go ahead peacefully.

However, though dispirited, the Oaks Action Group is not finished yet. We have appealed to the Secretary of State on the grounds that the original decision was flawed and a poor process. Frankly, we are not likely to win.

The only other option, legally, is Judicial Review which is expensive and seldom successful.

So, it is highly likely that the Oaks development will happen, and will squat like a monolithic canker in the middle of our town centre for decades.

The only other thing left to do is to try to influence Waitrose, as anchor tenant, to weigh in with the developers and try to make it marginally less bad.

So far, the company's response has been anodyne. But it is worth emailing, posting on the Waitrose Facebook page and tweeting them. Just to make it clear that, while we all welcome their return to Acton, doing so in an unpopular development, may not be good for business.

- ♦ Email: Mark Price (Waitrose's managing director), [mark\\_price@waitrose.co.uk](mailto:mark_price@waitrose.co.uk)
- ♦ Post: on the Waitrose Facebook page
- ♦ Tweet: @Waitrose, using #oaks action

## Acton Christmas Fair : low-key but profitable

Nancy Duin

The 7th of December may be remembered by some as Pearl Harbor Day but, in Acton in 2013, it was the date of the annual Christmas fair (with no aerial bombing).

As usual, the CCA had a stall selling bric-à-brac, books, toys and other delights. And, there was a satisfyingly large tombola—or, rather, two: one for adults and one for children.

There were far fewer stalls than in previous years, and we had little time to promote ours. This was largely because the council only started to organise the fair in mid-November.

But despite the short lead-time, we sold enough to raise an extremely respectable £391.21. Half of this will be used to support our organisation, and half will be sent to APPLE, the children/young people's charity in Acton Park.

## Creating a Neighbourhood Plan

Nancy Duin

Acton Central Forum (ACF) is in the early stages of establishing the Acton Town Centre Neighbourhood Forum. ACF is getting funds from central government for expenses, and canvassing people in all parts of Acton to take part.

The neighbourhood forum will be a government-designated group of people who live, work or have an interest in central Acton. ACF wants to identify those who would like to help to take the project forward.

ACF will work with them to create a Neighbourhood Plan. It is hoped this will reflect how local businesses and the community want their town centre to develop.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this group, come along to the West London Trade Union Club at 33 Acton High Street, W3 6ND, on Wednesday 29 January at 7pm

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Association (CCA) Issue 34,  
Winter 2014**

To contact the CCA:  
**Secretary:** Susanne Hickmott  
**Email:** churchfieldassoc@yahoo.co.uk  
**CCA email group:**  
Actoncentralemailgroup@yahoo.co.uk  
**Website:** www.churchfield.org

**JOIN THE CCA**

- ◆ Vote at meetings
  - ◆ Receive invitations to members' events
  - ◆ Join the Acton Central email group
  - ◆ Get a free CCA bag—see website
- Annual Membership fee**  
**Single**—£8 (£3.50 concessions);  
£5 direct debit (£2 concessions)  
**Household**—£12; £7.50 direct debit



Free CCA bag  
See website

## Socialists Win CCA Quiz

Susi Kirkwood

Our successful autumn CCA Quiz on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November once again took place at L'Oriental—the Lebanese restaurant at 94 Churchfield Road—in their cosy down-stairs room.

More than thirty CCA members and their friends took part and, as usual, the evening started with a supper of delicious Lebanese dishes, served at our tables.

There were six teams in all, and our wonderful quiz masters, Paul Talbot and Philippe Bruyer, devised a wide variety of questions and puzzlers to ensure that

everyone could answer at least some of them.

One challenge was to memorise a detailed cartoon-style action picture, and be ready to answer random questions on what was going on in the picture.

Later, we pored over photos of London landmarks taken from odd angles, trying to fathom out where they could be and wishing we had paid more attention to our city.

Various spot questions (such as, How long is the M25?) gave the teams a chance to win extra points. (Answer: 117 miles).

The Socialists emerged as the winning team with 131 points. They were closely followed by Maldon Salts, Common Carp, Acton Suspiciously, Hopeless and St Jude's.

Paul and Philippe have very kindly agreed to devise and organise another CCA Quiz in the spring. Anyone who was on the waiting list for the autumn quiz will be offered tickets first.

If you haven't yet tried a CCA quiz, please join us. There is a friendly atmosphere, and it is a great opportunity to meet other CCA members.

## Festive Mood amidst Flowers & Sparkle

Susi Kirkwood

The CCA's annual Christmas Party on the evening of Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December proved highly effective in getting us into the festive mood.

CCA members and friends gathered in the downstairs restaurant area of The Rocket pub in Churchfield Road. The tables were decorated with beautiful posies of flowers, tinsel and scattered sparklies.

Although we had planned to use the Rocket's sound system to play background music, the music in the bar was enough. More music would have made it difficult to hold a conversation.

People were introduced to one other over an initial glass of wine, and then we helped ourselves to a buffet supper. The arrangement of four or five tables made it easier to talk and eat.

The buffet was followed by a delicious sticky toffee pudding and ice-cream, served to us as we sat and chatted.

It provided an excellent opportunity for new CCA members to meet other new members, as well as those who have belonged to the CCA for some time. It was a very enjoyable evening for all.

### Interested in editing the CCA Newsletter?

- ◆ We already have an experienced group of contributors and welcome new ideas and input
  - ◆ It's easy to learn how to use the Publisher programme; you just need a computer
  - ◆ Contact Linda Taylor—[lindataylor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lindataylor@yahoo.co.uk)—for more information

### Future Social Events?

- ◆ Do you have a suggestion for a future CCA social event?
  - ◆ Would it be easy to organise?
- ◆ Let Susi know by emailing: [susi@robharrisproductions.com](mailto:susi@robharrisproductions.com)
  - ◆ The CCA committee is open to all suggestions